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ABSTRACT

The School Breakfast Program provides breakfast to millions of children from low-income families who otherwise might go hungry in the morning and be less ready to learn. This report is the thirteenth from the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) to examine the program, its benefits, and the performance of the nation and of each state in reaching children with school breakfasts during the 2002-2003 school year. Data were obtained from state reports to the U.S. Department of Agriculture and from an annual FRAC survey of state nutrition officials. In a slightly different methodology from previous scorecards, the student participation estimates are based on nine-month averages of state data from the months of September through May. Findings indicate that approximately 8.2 million children participated in the School Breakfast Program nationwide during the 2002-2003 school year. Only 42.3 students received free or reduced price breakfast for every 100 students receiving free or reduced price lunch. Nationally, 78.3 percent of schools that offered free/reduced price lunch participated in school breakfast, up from 77.6 percent the prior year. Participation in the School Breakfast program varies significantly from state to state. FRAC estimates that state school breakfast programs failed to reach 2 million eligible children. At least 40 states have schools, and often large school districts, with universal breakfast programs, which provide breakfast at no charge to all children. Finally, direct certification, whereby households participating in other assistance programs can be certified for free school meals without filling out school meal applications has greatly simplified the process for both schools and families. The report also examines obstacles to participation in the School Breakfast Program and suggests solutions, and highlights opportunities/strategies during congressional reauthorization of

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child nutrition programs to increase participation. Several data tables, including a list of state legislation promoting school breakfast are included. (Contains a 14-item bibliography.) (HTH)

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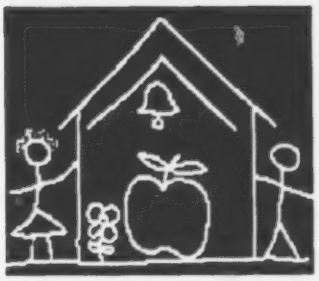

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SCHOOL BREAKFAST SCORECARD: 2003

Thirteenth Annual Status Report on the
SCHOOL BREAKFAST PROGRAM

Food Research and Action Center
November 2003

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction 1
Why Breakfast at School? 2
School Breakfast Basics 4
FRAC's Findings 5
- National Performance 5
- State Performance 6
- Figure 1: Student Participation in Free and Reduced Price SBP 6
- Figure 2: Schools with SBP as Percent of Schools with NSLP 7

Unserved Low-Income Children 10
State Efforts 10
- Universal Breakfast 11
- Direct Certification 12
- State Funding and Breakfast Requirements 13

Obstacles and Solutions 14
Opportunities During Congressional Reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Programs 16
Conclusion 17
Technical Notes 18
Table 1: Low-Income Student Participation in NSLP and SBP 19
Table 2: School Participation in NSLP and SBP 20
Table 3: Total Student Participation in SBP 21
Table 4: Participation and Funding if 55 Low-Income Students in SBP per 100 in NSLP 22
Table 5: State Legislation Promoting School Breakfast 23
Selected Bibliography 28

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INTRODUCTION

At the start of each school day, 8.2 million children – more than 6.7 million of them from low-income families – start the day right by eating a nutritious breakfast at school (see Table 3). This is because of the growth of the School Breakfast Program. Close to four out of every five schools that offer school lunch now also offer school breakfast to their students (see Table 2), and four out of every ten low-income children who consume a school lunch also eat breakfast at school (see Table 1).

This wasn't always so. The School Breakfast Program began in 1966 as a pilot program because Congress had special concerns about children from rural areas who had to travel long distances to school and students whose parents were too poor to provide them with a full breakfast. The program was made permanent in 1975, but it has taken a long time to reach the levels of participation by schools and students that we see today. Even in 1987, only 3.2 million low-income students were participating in the School Breakfast Program, but participation has more than doubled since then.

As the program has expanded to more schools and reached more students, study after study has shown that a good breakfast eaten at school boosts student achievement, reduces absenteeism, and improves student nutrition. These research results have become common knowledge in our nation, so much so that earlier this year, the Mayor of New York City announced that all of the city's schools would be offering free breakfast to every child regardless of income in order to increase school breakfast participation and boost academic performance. Mayor Michael Bloomberg said to reporters, "A kid comes to school without a decent meal in his or her stomach, they don't learn anything, so we're wasting our money." Similarly, Governor Jim Doyle of Wisconsin recently asked the state legislature to pass legislation that would require breakfast to be provided in every school in the state. The Governor called this request a "healthy kid initiative" and said, "It's about making sure our young people...are able to come to school, are able to get a good breakfast and able to participate in the classroom."

While millions of students now gain the health and educational benefits of a school breakfast, and while more and more school officials and policymakers are becoming aware of the importance of this program, there are still more than 9 million low-income students who participate in school lunch but go without this much-needed nutritional and educational boost in the morning (see Table 1). Many of these children are arriving at school not ready to learn and unable to concentrate, because they have not eaten.

This report, FRAC's thirteenth annual assessment of the School Breakfast Program, encourages parents, communities, schools, states, and the federal government to further expand use of this proven tool for meeting educational and nutritional needs in the country. It examines the program, its benefits, and the performance of the nation and of each state in reaching children with school breakfasts during the 2002-2003 school year. The report estimates the number of

additional children states could have helped, but did not, and nutrition funding states could have received, but did not, had each state performed as well as the top-performing states. For most states, such an improvement in school breakfast performance would provide millions of dollars in federal assistance to help thousands of low-income children. Nationally, it would mean serving an additional 2 million children and bringing over 400 million dollars to communities across the country.

Defining Hunger and Food Insecurity

Households classified as **hungry** *by an annual U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Census Bureau survey are those in which adults have decreased the quality and quantity of food they consume, because of lack of money, to the point where they are quite likely to be hungry on a frequent basis, or in which children's intake has been reduced, due to lack of family financial resources, to the point that children are likely to be hungry on a regular basis and adults' food intake is severely reduced. The number of hungry households rose to 3.8 million households from 2001 to 2002.*

Even when hunger is not present, households are considered **food-insecure** *when resources are so limited that adults in the household are running out of food, or reducing the quality of food their family eats, or feeding their children unbalanced diets, or skipping meals so their children can eat, or are forced to use emergency food charities or to take other serious steps to adjust to the economic problems threatening the adequacy of the family's diet. The number of food-insecure households also rose from 2001 to 2002, to 12.1 million U.S. households.*

WHY BREAKFAST AT SCHOOL?

There are many reasons to offer breakfast at school. Here are summaries of research findings and other arguments that strongly support breakfast programs in all schools.

Many children do not eat a nutritious breakfast at home. Millions of families in the United States cannot afford to feed their children a balanced, healthy breakfast every day. In 2002, 12.1 million children (16.7 percent of the nation's children) lived in poverty. Furthermore, in 2002, according to research by the United States Department of Agriculture and the Census Bureau, 16.5 percent of households with children under 18 were food insecure or hungry. Participation in free and reduced price school breakfasts helps these households stretch their limited food budgets.

Regardless of income, many families find that early morning school bus schedules, long commutes to jobs, and nontraditional work hours make it difficult to prepare or sit down for a nutritious family breakfast. In addition, children, especially teenagers, are sometimes not physically capable of eating breakfast at home when they first wake up. Other children may have long periods of time between an early breakfast at home and a late lunch at school, thus making school breakfast an important tool for avoiding the distractions of an empty stomach and preventing unhealthy snacking.

Missing breakfast impairs learning. Researchers find that children who skip breakfast are less able to distinguish among similar images, show increased errors, and have slower memory recall. Studies also show that hungry children have lower math scores and an increased likelihood to repeat a grade, and that behavioral, emotional and academic problems are more prevalent among hungry children. In addition, hungry children are more likely to be absent and tardy.

Eating breakfast at school helps students perform better. Research has shown that students who eat a school breakfast show a general increase in math and reading scores. In addition, students who increase their participation in the School Breakfast Program improve their math grades. Studies also find that children who eat breakfast at school – closer to class and test-taking time – perform better on standardized tests than those who skip breakfast or eat breakfast at home.

School breakfast improves behavior and learning environments. Studies not only show that hungry students have problems in the classroom, but that school breakfast can help. Students who participate in school breakfast have lower rates of absence and tardiness and exhibit decreased behavioral and psychological problems. In addition, children who eat school breakfast have fewer discipline problems and visit school nurses less often.

The School Breakfast Program can be an important preventive measure in our nation's battle to improve child nutrition and reduce childhood obesity. Breakfasts served as part of the School Breakfast Program are required to provide one-fourth or more of the key nutrients children need every day, and contain no more than 30 percent of calories from fat and 10 percent of calories from saturated fat. Research shows that children who participate in school breakfast eat more fruits, drink more milk, and consume less saturated fat than those who do not eat school breakfast or who have breakfast at home.

Over the last few years, health professionals have been raising an alarm about the increasing rate of obesity among U.S. adults and children. Almost two-thirds of adults are overweight or obese, and obesity rates have doubled among children and tripled among adolescents over the past 20 years. Overweight in childhood is associated with an increased risk of overweight and obesity in adulthood. These alarming figures translate into increased risks of premature death and an overall lower quality of life for millions because obesity is associated with an increased risk of diabetes, heart disease, stroke, asthma, osteoarthritis, psychological disorders, and cancer.

Research about breakfast eating demonstrates that skipping breakfast is associated with a significantly higher risk of obesity among adults. Researchers suggest that people who do not eat breakfast get very hungry later on in the day and tend to overeat as a result—consuming more calories each day than they would if they had eaten breakfast in the morning. If these calories are not used for energy, they are stored as fat, which results in increased weight.

The availability of a breakfast program at school ensures that students who, for whatever reason, do not eat breakfast at home can still start the day with a nutritious breakfast. In the short term, this means that they will not be as hungry for the rest of the day and thus will not be tempted to overeat at other meals or snack on high fat, high sugar foods before lunch. In the longer term, the availability of school breakfast can help build a lifelong breakfast habit that has the potential to contribute significantly to good health in adulthood.

The positive impact of participating in a school breakfast program may be especially important to low income children. Recent research has demonstrated that food insecure 5- to 12-year-old girls who participate in School Breakfast or School Lunch or Food Stamps, or any combination of these programs, have significantly reduced odds of being at risk of overweight when compared to similar girls who do not participate in at least one of these programs. (Food insecurity is the inability of a household to meet its basic food needs due to lack of sufficient financial resources.)

The researchers conclude in the *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine*, "These results point to the importance of food assistance to children in food insecure households not only to alleviating food insecurity, but also in potentially protecting them from excess weight gain."

In short, school breakfast is a proven tool for helping millions of children from food insecure and hungry households, and children from a wide variety of other backgrounds. Moreover, the School Breakfast Program can expand to meet these diverse needs. Like the National School Lunch Program, the School Breakfast Program provides federal funds to reimburse schools for meals they serve to eligible low-income school children without arbitrary caps on participation or funding.

SCHOOL BREAKFAST PROGRAM BASICS

The School Breakfast Program, like the National School Lunch Program, is an entitlement program, meaning that any school offering meals under the federal guidelines will be reimbursed with federal dollars. Also, any student who attends a school with the federal school meal programs is allowed to participate. However, the school must participate before a hungry child can be fed.

What students pay for meals depends on their household incomes. Children from families with incomes at or below 130 percent of the federal poverty line receive meals for free. Children from families with incomes between 130 percent and 185 percent of the poverty line receive meals at a reduced price – the students pay a share of the cost (no more than 30 cents per breakfast). All other participating students, officially designated as receiving "paid" meals, pay most of the cost for their meals or snacks, although all students' meals do receive some level of federal support. The exceptions to this pricing structure are schools that offer breakfast at no charge to all students (see page 11).

During the 2002-2003 school year, schools were reimbursed $1.17 in federal funds for each free meal, $0.87 for each reduced price meal and $0.22 for each paid meal. "Severe need" schools, where 40 percent or more of the lunches served two years prior were free or reduced price, receive slightly higher reimbursements per meal. Schools in Alaska and Hawaii are also reimbursed with higher rates per meal.

School Meal Programs
Federal Income Guidelines

Free Meals Maximum Household Income		
Family Size	School Year	
	2003-04	2002-03
1	$11,674	$11,518
2	15,756	15,522
3	19,838	19,526
4	23,920	23,530
5	28,002	27,534
6	32,084	31,538
7	36,166	35,542
8	40,248	39,546
Add for each add'l member	+4,082	+4,004

Reduced Price Meals Maximum Household Income		
Family Size	School Year	
	2003-04	2002-03
1	$16,613	$16,391
2	22,422	22,089
3	28,231	27,787
4	34,040	33,485
5	39,849	39,183
6	45,658	44,881
7	51,467	50,579
8	57,276	56,277
Add for each add'l member	+5,809	+5,698

FRAC'S FINDINGS

The data in this report are collected from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and an annual survey of state child nutrition officials conducted by FRAC. Student participation estimates (except portions of Figure 1) are based on nine-month averages of state data from the months of September through May of each relevant school year, as provided by the USDA and verified by FRAC with state officials.

This is a slightly different methodology than that used in previous School Breakfast Scorecards, which compared snapshots of student participation from March of each year. This shift to nine-month averages provides a more accurate representation at the state level of annual student participation in the school meal programs. The methodology for school participation estimates remains the same as in past years, based on state data from the month of October of each year. (For technical notes, see page 18.)

National Performance

Since it is broadly used by low-income children, National School Lunch Program participation is a useful benchmark against which to measure student participation in the School Breakfast Program. And since the National School Lunch Program is available in more than 95 percent of schools nationwide, it is also a useful benchmark against which to measure school participation in the School Breakfast Program.

Student Participation

Approximately 8.2 million children participated in the School Breakfast Program nationwide during the 2002-2003 school year. Of these, more than 6.7 million, or 78.8 percent, received free or reduced price meals (see Figure 1 and Table 3). Since 1990, the number of low-income students receiving free or reduced price breakfasts has doubled.

During the 2002-2003 school year, 27.8 million children participated in the National School Lunch Program, and 16 million, or 57.5 percent, of them received free or reduced price lunch.

Comparing the two programs, during the 2002-2003 school year, only 42.3 students received free or reduced price breakfast for every 100 students receiving free or reduced price school lunch (see Table 1). There is considerable need for improvement on this measure, as many of the low-income children who rely on free or reduced price school lunch, but do not get school breakfast, would benefit greatly from a healthy breakfast at school every morning.

For the first time since 1991 (the year of FRAC's first School Breakfast Scorecard), there was no increase in the ratio of students receiving free or reduced price

breakfast to those receiving free or reduced price lunch compared to the prior year. While there were approximately 200,000 more students receiving free or reduced price school breakfast than in the previous school year, the increase in students receiving free or reduced price lunch was more than twice as many, or over 450,000 additional students.

School Participation

Nationally, during the 2002-2003 school year, 78.3 percent of the schools that offered school lunch participated in school breakfast. Although both the number of schools offering breakfast and the number offering lunch increased, this was an increase in the proportion of schools participating in the breakfast program, up from 77.6 percent in the prior year (see Figure 2 and Table 2).

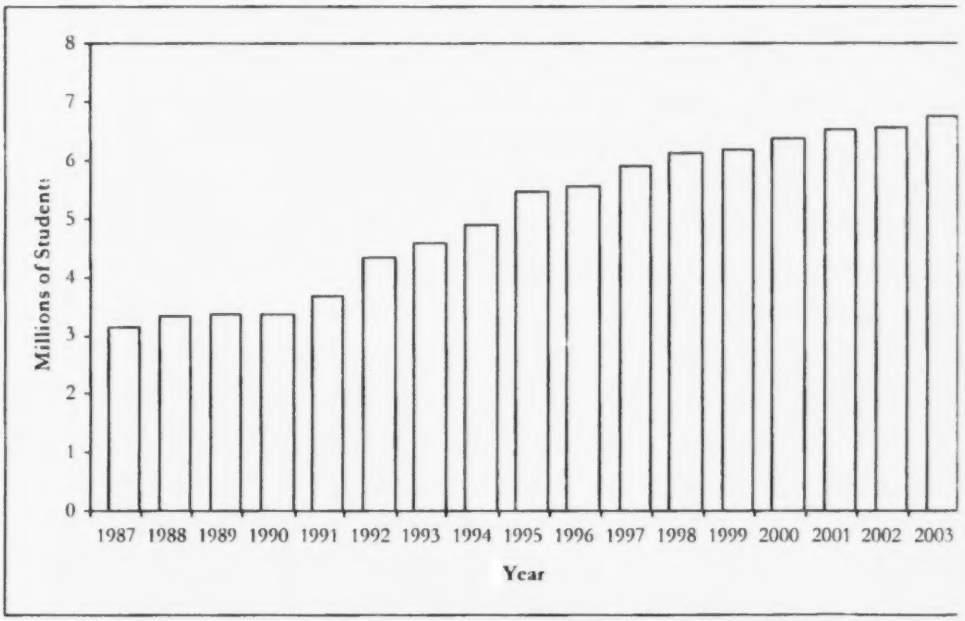
State Performance

Often, greater participation in the School Breakfast Program reflects the availability of federal funds on an entitlement basis plus effective state and local efforts to make school breakfast more attractive and accessible to students. State and local strategies include state requirements that certain types of schools participate; supplementary state funding for school breakfast; reduction of any stigma students may associate with participation in the program; outreach and education campaigns; elimination of paperwork barriers in the application process; and implementation of universal free breakfast programs (see Table 5 and page 11). There is thus considerable variation in state performance.

Figure 1: Student Participation in the Free and Reduced Price School Breakfast Program

Free & Reduced Price School Breakfast Participation

Year	Students
1987	3.2 million
1988	3.3 million
1989	3.4 million
1990	3.4 million
1991	3.7 million
1992	4.3 million
1993	4.6 million
1994	4.9 million
1995	5.5 million
1996	5.6 million
1997	5.9 million
1998	6.1 million
1999	6.2 million
2000	6.4 million
2001	6.5 million
2002	6.6 million*
2003	6.8 million*



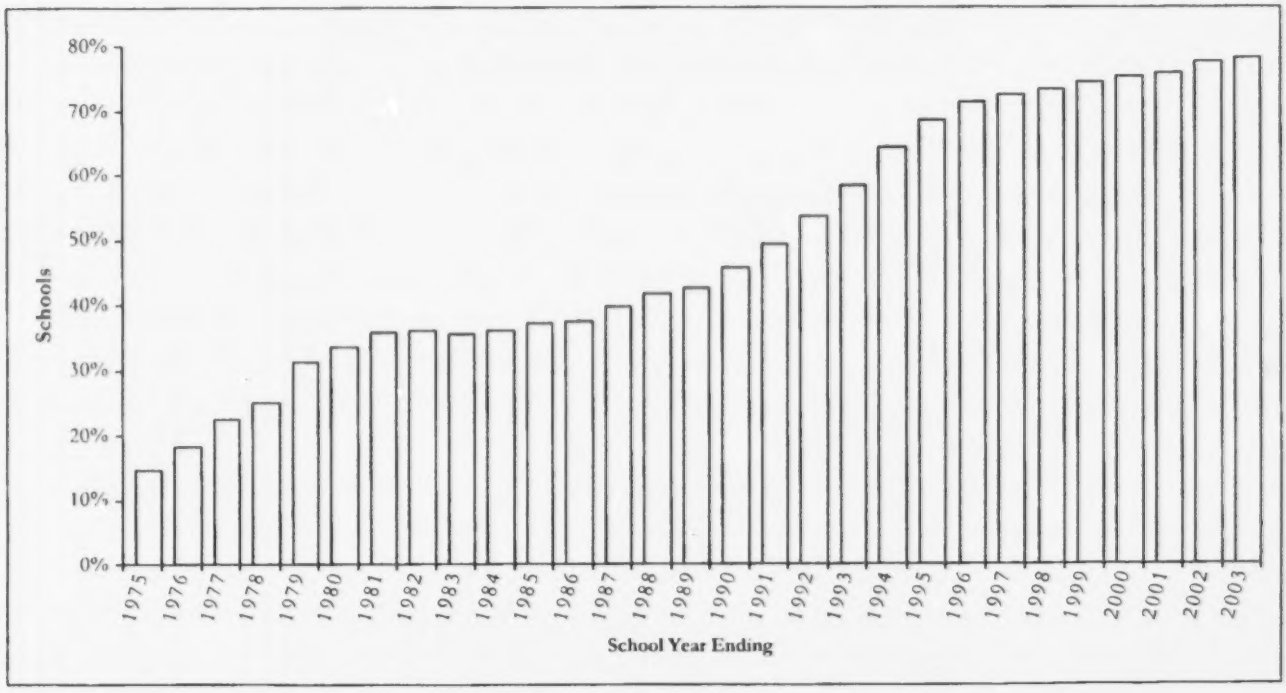
**The data for 1987–2001 are estimates of student participation in March of each year, while the data for 2002–2003 are nine-month averages. (If March estimates were used, 2002 would list 6.7 million students and March 2003 would list 7.0 million. See page 18 for technical notes.)*

Student Participation

Twelve states, two more than the previous year, provided free or reduced price breakfast to at least 50 students for every 100 students receiving free or reduced price lunch during the 2002 2003 school year (see Table 1). Oregon, which ranked eighth in the previous year, has jumped to the top of the standings. New Mexico, Vermont and Louisiana are new additions to this list, while North Carolina has dropped off this list. As in years past, southern states dominate the top performing states:

Oregon	55.4
West Virginia	54.8
Mississippi	54.4
Kentucky	53.9
Oklahoma	53.4
Arkansas	53.2
Texas	52.7
Georgia	51.3
New Mexico	50.8
Vermont	50.6
South Carolina	50.4
Louisiana	50.1

Figure 2: Schools with School Breakfast Program as a Percent of Schools with National School Lunch Program



Oregon showed the greatest improvement in student participation among all states, adding almost 4 more low-income students in school breakfast per 100 in school lunch. A significant factor in Oregon's increase is the implementation of universal free breakfast (see page 11) in half of Portland's public schools, which includes breakfast in the classroom in elementary schools and "grab-and-go" breakfasts in high schools.

The other most improved states were Vermont, North Dakota, New Mexico and Alaska, which all increased their ratios by 1.5 or more low-income students in school breakfast per 100 in school lunch. A main reason for Vermont's increase appears to be a school breakfast expansion campaign, which focused on the lowest-performing schools in the state and offered them examples of best practices.

Ten states, two fewer than the previous year, reached 34 or fewer low-income students with school breakfast per 100 reached with school lunch. Connecticut was not among the lowest-performing states in the prior year but fell into the category in 2002-2003, while Idaho, North Dakota and Wyoming improved their performance enough to rise off this list:

Wisconsin	23.8
New Jersey	24.4
Utah	27.6
Illinois	28.3
Alaska	30.6
Colorado	31.2
Nebraska	31.9
Connecticut	33.4
New York	33.8
New Hampshire	33.8

The sharpest participation decreases were in Maryland and Kansas, which saw declines of more than 4 low-income students in school breakfast per 100 in school lunch. In Maryland, an unusually large number of delayed starts of school days due to inclement weather in 2002-2003 seems to be one main reason for this decrease. In North Carolina and West Virginia, their ratios decreased by 1.5 students.

School Participation

Many states require that all schools, or those with a certain proportion of low-income students, participate in the School Breakfast Program (see Table 5). Eighteen states, one fewer than in the previous year, operated school breakfast in 90 percent or more of the schools operating school lunch during the 2002-2003 school year (see Table 2). Mississippi and Maryland are new additions to this list, while Arizona, Idaho and Iowa dropped off it:

South Carolina	99.6%
Georgia	99.5%

West Virginia	98.8%
Delaware	98.2%
Texas	97.6%
Arkansas	97.2%
North Carolina	96.7%
Rhode Island	95.3%
New Mexico	93.0%
Louisiana	92.0%
District of Columbia	91.9%
Kentucky	91.7%
Florida	91.6%
Oregon	91.4%
Tennessee	91.2%
Mississippi	90.4%
Maryland	90.4%
Hawaii	90.3%

Five states increased their percent of school breakfast schools by at least 3 percent, led by Georgia, which increased by almost 6 percent. The passage of a school breakfast mandate in Georgia (see Table 5) a few years ago appears to have contributed considerably to this increase. The other most-improved states are Montana, Vermont, Wyoming and Colorado. In Vermont, private funding for small start-up grants seems to be a key factor in this improvement.

Six states, two fewer than the prior year, offered school breakfast in less than 60 percent of the schools that offered school lunch. Colorado and North Dakota improved their performance enough to rise off this list:

New Jersey	43.6%
Wisconsin	45.7%
Connecticut	49.8%
Ohio	52.5%
Nebraska	52.7%
Illinois	57.6%

Six states saw their percent of school breakfast schools fall by at least 3 percent, led by Idaho, which decreased by over 7 percent. The other states are Indiana, Hawaii, Utah, the District of Columbia, and Arizona. It appears that the decreases in school participation in at least some of these states were due to transitions to new state-level software or internet-based claiming systems for school meals, as well as consolidation of schools. Both of these factors could lead to lower school counts of school breakfast participation, while few or no schools actually were dropped off the program.

UNSERVED LOW-INCOME CHILDREN

Participation by children in the School Breakfast Program varies significantly from state to state. No state is reaching as many children as it should, but some states are providing clear leadership in this important measure. The higher participation rates reached by a number of states show just how much room for improvement there is in the other states, using current standards as an achievable goal. By this standard set by the best states, there are millions of eligible, low income children who are missing nutritious and educationally important breakfasts, and the remaining states, altogether, are forgoing hundreds of millions of dollars in available federal funds for child nutrition.

To provide one estimate of the number of children who go unserved, but whom states could serve, and the amount of federal funding states are forgoing, FRAC assumed each state could do as well as the average of the current top three states in the performance ratio: a standard of 55 free or reduced price breakfast participants per 100 free or reduced price lunch participants. This standard is achievable because there is no reason to think that even the best performing states are performing optimally.

FRAC figured how many additional children per state could be reached at the 55 per 100 ratio. FRAC then multiplied this unserved population in each state by the reimbursement rate for 180 school days of breakfast. This estimates the amount of federal breakfast funding each state could have obtained if it had performed as well as the three best states in the 2002-2003 school year. (For more technical notes, see page 18.)

According to this formula, state school breakfast programs failed to reach 2 million children eligible for free or reduced price breakfasts, and states failed to access close to $419 million in federal funding to provide these children with breakfasts (see Table 4). The states sacrificing the most federal funds in absolute terms are those with both large populations and substantial lags in ratios. For example, California, Florida, Illinois, New Jersey, New York, Ohio and Pennsylvania together have more than half of the 2 million children who were unserved under this criterion.

STATE EFFORTS

The basic framework of the School Breakfast Program is set by federal law, and the federal government provides reimbursement meant to cover 100 percent of the costs of free school breakfasts (and all but 30 cents of the cost of reduced price breakfast, and a modest 22 cents per "paid" breakfast for students with family incomes over 185 percent of the poverty line).

Many states have built on the federal framework by providing additional funds, by legislating that schools with significant proportions of low income students must participate in the federal program, or by taking other steps to promote the

expansion of school breakfast. This is important to encourage school districts; push along reluctant schools; provide leadership; and help meet costs for schools with relatively high labor, food, or other expenses.

Higher student and school participation in school breakfast often reflects these state – and local – efforts to make school breakfast more attractive and accessible. Altogether, 37 states have their own legislative requirements concerning and/or provide state funds for school breakfast (see Table 5). In addition, at least 40 states have schools, and often large school districts, with universal breakfast programs, which provide breakfast at no charge to all children.

In addition, to some degree almost all states use direct certification, a federal option that allows states to make students automatically eligible for free school meals if their families participate in food stamps, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), or the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR).

Universal Breakfast

Universal school breakfast programs are those that provide breakfast to all children in a school – or district – regardless of family income, without charge. Because a universal program reduces administrative burdens, draws no lines between students based on income, and rapidly increases participation so that every child can do bett in school, the idea is gaining popularity.

At least 40 states have schools, and often large school districts, with universal breakfast programs, which provide breakfast at no charge to all children. New York City, Cleveland (Ohio), and Kansas City (Missouri) are among the cities that have (or have announced the implementation of) universal breakfast in every school. Other cities, such as Portland (Oregon), offer breakfast at no charge to all students in at least half of their schools.

One way schools can offer universal breakfasts is to implement "Provision 2 or 3" of the National School Lunch Act, the federal act that also covers school breakfasts. These provisions allow schools to provide breakfasts (and lunches) for several years at no charge to all students without collecting meal applications, and still receive federal school meals funding. At least 40 states take some advantage of Provision 2 and/or Provision 3.

Under Provisions 2 and 3, the results of the school meal application process for one year – the proportions of students in the free, reduced price and paid categories – ar then used as the baseline for calculating a school's reimbursements for free, reduced price and paid meals for the following three or four years, depending on the provision selected. The school can use this approach for breakfast, or lunch, or both but schools have found the most dramatic positive effects in breakfast. The school then offers breakfast at no charge to all children. By providing breakfasts at no charg to children regardless of family income, schools save money through eliminating the

laborious tasks of annually collecting, handling and verifying applications for discounted meals as well as daily collection of payments from students. If schools ca demonstrate that local economic conditions have not substantially changed at the end of the 3- or 4-year cycle of the provision, they may be able to continue universal breakfasts for another cycle without collecting applications from families again.

By both eliminating forms that parents complete and inviting all students to eat for free, schools can remove several barriers to participation. Targeting the entire stude body for breakfast decreases the stigma of school breakfasts being for "poor kids" only. In addition, offering breakfasts to all students at no charge allows breakfasts to be served in the classroom, an innovation that is winning over even reluctant educators once the educational and behavioral benefits are seen (see page 14). Classroom breakfasts also eliminate problems with bus schedules. Teachers find classroom breakfasts have not interfered with class schedules. In fact, educators find students more alert and ready to learn after in-the-classroom breakfasts. Support sta for their part, find this way of serving breakfast easier than preparing the cafeteria early in the morning and cleaning it twice in one day, a concern often raised about school breakfast before classroom service is tried.

Direct Certification

Direct certification helps increase low-income student participation in school meals by allowing households that participate in food stamps, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) to be certified for free school meals without filling out school meal applications. In some states, to determine who is eligible, school or state agency officials cross-reference school enrollment lists (taking precautions to ensure students' privacy) with food stamp, TANF and/or FDPIR lists. In other states, food stamp, TANF and/or FDPIR offices send letters to all households with school-aged children, informing them that they are eligible for free school meals. In some states, a parent must sign the letter and return it to the school in order for the child to participate. In other states, once an eligible household receives notification that its children are eligible for free meals, no additional action is necessary – parents notify their schools only if they do not want free meals for their children.

Direct certification greatly simplifies the school meals certification process for both families and school officials. A recent national study of direct certification found that direct certification helps hundreds of thousands of children who might not otherwise participate become certified for free meals. According to the study, about 61 percent of school districts nationwide used direct certification during the 2001-2002 school year.

Some states still report local problems implementing direct certification, particularly lack of technical equipment, staff, or other resources. But these problems have been managed in many places, and direct certification has important results. Unfortunately, while at least 36 states use both food stamp and TANF enrollment lists, another ten states use only food stamp or TANF lists to certify

eligible families. Almost half the states that do direct certification reported that 100 percent of their schools participate in it, but overall average use in the states that have direct certification is only a little over three quarters of schools.

State Funding and Breakfast Requirements

To guarantee that the School Breakfast Program is as widely available as possible, at least in schools with significant concentrations of poor students, 25 states have laws mandating that certain schools participate in the program (see Table 5). Generally, requirements are linked to a school's percentage of low-income students, defined by the proportion of students who are found eligible for free and reduced price meals, or by the proportion of students receiving free and reduced price lunches.

The percentage of students varies widely. For example, in Kansas all schools with over 35 percent free or reduced price eligible students are required to have the School Breakfast Program. Beginning in the 2004-2005 school year, New Jersey passed a state mandate requiring that school breakfast be served in schools where 20 percent or more of the students enrolled on October 1st of the preceding school year were free or reduced price eligible.

Rhode Island, South Carolina, and Vermont take the best approach. They require all public schools to participate in the School Breakfast Program. Vermont passed its state mandate this year, which will go into effect in 2004.

To assist schools in providing breakfast to students, 22 states provided state funds for one purpose or another related to school breakfast: as additional per meal reimbursements (to supplement the federal per meal reimbursement); as start-up and/or expansion funds to finance costs related to the start of new programs or expansion of participation in existing programs; as payment for the costs of outreach; as incentive grants; or to pay for supervision costs. Some states, such as California, will provide both start-up funds and additional reimbursements for all free or reduced price breakfasts served.

Three states provide state funding for universal free school breakfast programs in certain schools: Illinois, Massachusetts, and Maryland. North Carolina, not counted in the total number of states providing funding, provides funding for universal breakfasts for kindergarten only. In 2003, Minnesota's legislature repealed Minnesota Statute § 124D.115, which provided assistance for "The Fast Break to Learning" universal school breakfast program.

OBSTACLES AND SOLUTIONS

Over the years, people who have been working to secure school breakfast programs for all the children who need them have heard the same rationales given over and over for why programs cannot be provided or why children will not participate. However, as is made obvious by the ongoing growth and the percentages of schools and students now participating in the program nationwide, one by one the perceived obstacles to operating this important program have been overcome or shown not to be real barriers. School breakfast proponents have heard:

"School buses arrive too late for children to eat breakfast at school."

Many schools have changed bus schedules slightly to accommodate the time needed to eat a school breakfast because they understand or have witnessed its positive impact on children's learning and classroom behavior. For example, Kentucky has acted on this by requiring buses to arrive in sufficient time for schools to serve breakfast prior to the instructional day.

Others have solved the problems of late bus arrivals by providing simple, nutritious breakfasts in the classroom at the start of the regular school day. This way, the obstacles of students who are unable to go to school early, and inadequate breakfast periods, are solved without disrupting teaching schedules. Schools, advocates, and state and federal officials need to place more emphasis on spreading classroom breakfast as a promising method for improving nutrition and academics while addressing scheduling problems.

"Even when students go to school early for breakfast, the school breakfast period does not provide enough time for students to eat breakfast."

The state can and should set a standard for the amount of time children should have to eat school breakfast. For example, the Board of Education in West Virginia tackles the problem by requiring that students be given at least 10 minutes to eat after receiving breakfast. Again, breakfast in the classroom is a promising way to overcome these morning scheduling obstacles.

"Teachers and administrators are opposed to classroom breakfast"

Focus groups, academic research and informal interviews show that, once they have experienced breakfast in the classroom, teachers and principals overwhelmingly support it. A teacher from a Maryland school that serves breakfast in the classroom said, "I would be upset now if they took the [classroom] breakfast program away." Teachers say that the two things that concerned them – classroom trash disposal and less instructional time – have turned out not to be problems. Each classroom is provided with a large waste receptacle and the children clean up after themselves. The classroom time spent eating brings worthwhile attention and behavioral dividends the rest of the morning.

"Parents (or voters) do not want this government program."

This indicates the need for greater outreach and community education about the many positive effects of school breakfast on student test scores, grades, behavior, absentee rates, and tardiness, as well as childhood obesity.

"Students do not wish to be perceived as 'poor' by participating in school breakfast"

Universal breakfast, which allows all students to receive breakfast at no charge regardless of family income, and universal classroom breakfast have been recognized as important ways for schools to decrease the stigma attached to participation in school breakfast. Many schools succeed in expanding participation in the breakfast program, for poor and non-poor students alike, by marketing it to all children who haven't eaten breakfast before they get to school, regardless of family income.

Even without universal breakfast, schools are not allowed to openly identify, even inadvertently, any students as eligible for free or reduced price breakfast or lunch. Schools are required to take whatever means necessary to prevent overt identification of low-income children in the school meal programs.

"Children in our area don't need this program. They should be eating at home."

Many low-income families have difficulty making ends meet when it comes to their food budgets. Regardless of income, and for many reasons, many children today start their mornings without a good breakfast. The availability of school breakfasts and lunches ensures that children from these families can receive nutritious meals every day at school. Eating school breakfast put children at the greatest advantage for learning and also can help prevent obesity.

"This program will cost us too much. We don't have the staff or facilities to operate it."

Almost 80 percent of the schools that offer the School Lunch Program also offer School Breakfast. They have learned that reimbursements for school breakfasts are sufficient for covering costs. They also know that generally, with the school lunch facilities already available, and the simple School Breakfast nutrition requirements, staff can add a short amount of time to their work schedules and serve an attractive and nutritious breakfast. Some schools even pack brown bag breakfasts the night before that children can pick up in the morning as they enter the cafeteria or the classroom.

OPPORTUNITIES DURING CONGRESSIONAL REAUTHORIZATION OF THE CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS

In 2004, Congress will be reviewing and reauthorizing the child nutrition programs, including the School Breakfast and Lunch Programs. (The reauthorization process, which was scheduled to occur in 2003, has been delayed by Congress to early 2004.) This provides an excellent opportunity to remove obstacles that stand in the way of more children receiving a nutritious breakfast every morning before they face the challenges of the school day. Congress can make it easier for schools to participate in the School Breakfast Program, and it can ensure that every child who comes to school needing breakfast will have one readily available. Here are several strategies that could increase School Breakfast Program participation:

Encouraging participation by schools and children through the creation of "universal" breakfast programs – providing breakfast at no charge to all students.

The experience of school officials and on-going research have shown that offering breakfast at no charge to all children in a school, rather than just to low-income children, improves student achievement, behavior and attendance, and pulls more hungry, low-income children into the program as the stigma applied to a program "just for poor kids" is removed. Universal breakfast programs also eliminate a significant amount of paperwork and staff time, freeing resources up for program improvements.

While it would be most desirable to implement universal breakfast in all schools, significant steps can be made in this direction by beginning with certain groups of schools. For example, universal breakfast could be initiated first in schools with high percentages of low-income children, or in high schools where school breakfast is less likely to be available, and students are most likely to have skipped breakfast at home.

Providing grants to states that will provide targeted schools with the resources they need to start new breakfast programs, implement "breakfast in the classroom," or conduct community outreach on the availability and benefits of the breakfast program.

Schools with limited resources may want to start up a breakfast program, expand its reach among the student body, or operate breakfast in the classroom to overcome logistical problems in getting children to school in time for breakfast, but may not have the resources they need to accomplish these goals. Federally funded grants to schools in greatest need could make the critical difference in ensuring that children have access to a nutritious breakfast every school day.

Making it easier for schools in low-income areas to get the higher "severe need" reimbursement for the School Breakfast Program.

Removal of the unwieldy cost accounting requirement that schools with large numbers of low-income students must follow to obtain the "severe need" reimbursement (see page 4) would take a lot of the paperwork out of running a school breakfast program. The extra resources provided by the increased reimbursement and the reduction in paperwork costs could draw more schools into the program and allow schools to provide better breakfasts and enhanced services.

CONCLUSION

Anti-hunger advocates, school officials and state agencies have developed tried-and-true strategies over the years that have worked effectively across the nation to expand and improve the School Breakfast Program. It is important to continue and accelerate this progress because family lifestyles increasingly make school breakfast a necessary boost, and because school breakfast is ideally suited to tackle today's greatest challenges to our nation's children, by supporting academic achievement and reducing the risk of obesity.

Expanding school and student participation in the School Breakfast Program is not rocket science, but also it is not easy: it requires sustained, collaborative work over a period of time. States can help expand and improve school breakfast by providing financial support to supplement federal meal reimbursements, to carry out outreach campaigns, and to spread universal breakfast programs; by requiring certain or all schools to offer breakfast; and by encouraging schools to take full advantage of paperwork-saving methods such as direct certification and Provisions 2 and 3.

Schools can help by integrating breakfast into the school day, such as serving it after the first bell rings in the classroom. Schools can also work to remove any stigma that exists around participation in the breakfast program, by marketing it to all children and making sure that their programs do not inadvertently distinguish poor children from their more affluent peers. Providing school breakfast at no charge to all children, regardless of income level, eliminates any stigma while ensuring that every child starts the day ready to learn.

The federal government can help by making funds available to support universal and in-classroom programs, to help with start-up and outreach costs, and to ease severe need reimbursement procedures.

As a critical educational and health support, school breakfast should be available to every school child in this nation. No child should have to start the school day hungry to learn, but unable to do so because of a hungry stomach.

TECHNICAL NOTES

The data in this report are collected from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and an annual survey of state child nutrition officials conducted by FRAC. This report does not include students or schools that participate in school meal programs in Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands or Department of Defense schools.

Student participation estimates (except for portions of Figure 1) are based on nine-month averages of state participation from the months of September through May of each year, as provided by the USDA and verified by FRAC with state officials. This is a slightly different methodology than that used in previous School Breakfast Scorecards, which compared student participation from only March of each year. This shift to nine-month data provides a more accurate representation of student participation in the school meal programs. (The data for 1987–2001 in Figure 1 retain the use of only March numbers.)

USDA student participation estimates are based on meal count data reported monthly by states. These numbers often undergo revisions by states as accounting procedures find errors, or other estimates become confirmed. For consistency, all the USDA data used in this report are from the states' 90-day revisions of the monthly reports. Furthermore, to calculate participation, USDA uses a formula to adjust numbers upwards to account for participation by students who are absent on one or more days or otherwise do not eat meals every day in a month.

The methodology for school participation estimates remains the same as in past years, based on the number of participating schools reported by states to USDA in October of each school year. This number, which fluctuates over the course of the year, includes not only public schools but also private schools, residential child care and other institutions that operate school meal programs but may not report to state agencies and may report to USDA separately.

To estimate the amount of federal breakfast funding each state could have obtained if it had performed as well as the three best states in the 2002-2003 school year, FRAC first calculated the number of additional children per state who would be reached at the 55 per 100 ratio. This unserved population in each state was multiplied by the reimbursement rate for 180 school days of breakfast. FRAC assumed each state's mix of free and reduced price students would apply to any new participants, and conservatively assumed that no new student's meal is reimbursed at the higher rate that "severe need" schools receive.

Due to rounding, totals in the tables may not add up to 100 percent.

Table 1: LOW-INCOME STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL LUNCH (NSLP) AND BREAKFAST (SBP) PROGRAMS

State	School Year 2001-02				School Year 2002-03				Change fr SY 2001-0 SY 2002-
	Free & Reduced Price (F&RP) NSLP Students	F&RP SBP Students	Students in SBP per 100 in NSLP	Rank	F&RP NSLP Students	F&RP SBP Students	Students in SBP per 100 in NSLP	Rank	
Alabama	327,677	137,158	41.9	23	334,608	142,429	42.6	20	0.7
Alaska	29,392	8,499	28.9	47	30,144	9,237	30.6	47	1.7
Arizona	317,551	128,046	40.3	25	339,895	140,048	41.2	24	0.9
Arkansas	193,237	104,908	54.3	4	197,348	104,927	53.2	6	-1.1
California	1,970,024	766,498	38.9	28	2,030,009	786,769	38.8	28	-0.2
Colorado	154,707	47,148	30.5	46	163,019	50,884	31.2	46	0.7
Connecticut	125,249	43,311	34.6	39	128,996	43,062	33.4	44	-1.2
Delaware	33,447	14,019	41.9	22	35,064	14,717	42.0	21	0.1
D.C.	43,899	18,579	42.3	20	41,507	17,414	42.0	22	-0.4
Florida	920,681	387,737	42.1	21	951,987	409,175	43.0	19	0.9
Georgia	606,382	314,156	51.8	7	627,517	322,127	51.3	8	-0.5
Hawaii	65,882	24,910	37.8	31	64,719	24,806	38.3	29	0.5
Idaho	74,443	25,046	33.6	41	77,779	27,009	34.7	39	1.1
Illinois	666,284	186,903	28.1	48	674,573	190,581	28.3	48	0.2
Indiana	255,969	96,370	37.6	32	275,044	104,700	38.1	30	0.4
Iowa	121,950	44,107	36.2	35	127,409	45,938	36.1	36	-0.1
Kansas	133,513	63,853	47.8	13	140,169	60,403	43.1	18	-4.7
Kentucky	274,714	151,150	55.0	2	279,674	150,649	53.9	4	-1.2
Louisiana	404,758	201,282	49.7	11	403,427	202,061	50.1	12	0.4
Maine	49,555	19,282	38.9	27	47,940	19,184	40.0	26	1.1
Maryland	220,453	100,714	45.7	17	224,669	93,096	41.4	23	-4.2
Massachusetts	220,654	98,049	44.4	19	221,621	97,185	43.9	17	-0.6
Michigan	417,481	173,958	41.7	24	432,670	175,732	40.6	25	-1.1
Minnesota	190,966	73,955	38.7	30	194,885	73,636	37.8	31	-0.9
Mississippi	290,804	159,260	54.8	3	289,454	157,508	54.4	3	-0.3
Missouri	299,151	136,372	45.6	18	298,994	136,385	45.6	15	0.0
Montana	37,967	13,544	35.7	36	37,748	13,858	36.7	35	1.0
Nebraska	85,498	27,886	32.6	44	88,563	28,263	31.9	45	-0.7
Nevada	81,724	31,717	38.8	29	86,573	32,594	37.6	32	-1.2
New Hampshire	27,383	9,108	33.3	43	28,624	9,680	33.8	42	0.6
New Jersey	317,557	74,060	23.3	51	312,755	76,387	24.4	50	1.1
New Mexico	150,223	73,423	48.9	12	152,640	77,526	50.8	9	1.9
New York	1,137,404	387,189	34.0	40	1,134,820	383,004	33.8	43	-0.3
North Carolina	465,877	236,258	50.7	10	494,092	243,350	49.3	13	-1.5
North Dakota	27,316	8,900	32.6	45	26,960	9,350	34.7	40	2.1
Ohio	457,762	165,751	36.2	34	471,450	174,284	37.0	34	0.8
Oklahoma	231,674	122,965	53.1	5	241,823	129,203	53.4	5	0.4
Oregon	159,074	82,053	51.6	8	164,884	91,427	55.4	1	3.9
Pennsylvania	458,877	161,533	35.2	37	467,220	167,293	35.8	37	0.6
Rhode Island	40,152	14,605	36.4	33	42,664	16,048	37.6	33	1.2
South Carolina	290,441	147,424	50.8	9	295,661	148,950	50.4	11	-0.4
South Dakota	42,525	14,965	35.2	38	42,684	14,945	35.0	38	-0.2
Tennessee	347,814	165,403	47.6	14	353,990	167,452	47.3	14	-0.3
Texas	1,740,798	905,670	52.0	6	1,842,303	970,704	52.7	7	0.7
Utah	115,317	30,868	26.8	49	122,860	33,891	27.6	49	0.8
Vermont	20,866	9,832	47.1	15	21,784	11,026	50.6	10	3.5
Virginia	293,049	133,910	45.7	16	305,697	135,589	44.4	16	-1.3
Washington	261,733	105,257	40.2	26	273,502	109,340	40.0	27	-0.2
West Virginia	109,514	61,615	56.3	1	116,177	63,614	54.8	2	-1.5
Wisconsin	201,041	46,962	23.4	50	209,188	49,771	23.8	51	0.4
Wyoming	21,402	7,141	33.4	42	21,843	7,488	34.3	41	0.9
TOTAL	**15,531,804**	**6,563,309**	**42.3**		**15,989,626**	**6,764,699**	**42.3**		**0.0**

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Table 2: SCHOOL PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL LUNCH (NSLP) AND BREAKFAST (SBP) PROGRAMS

State	School Year 2001-02				School Year 2002-03				Change from SY 2001-02 to SY 2002-03
	NSLP Schools	SBP Schools	SBP Schools as % of NSLP Schools	Rank	NSLP Schools	SBP Schools	SBP Schools as % of NSLP Schools	Rank	
Alabama	1,537	1,204	78.3%	31	1,537	1,228	79.9%	31	1.6%
Alaska	423	274	64.8%	40	431	274	63.6%	42	-1.2%
Arizona	1,411	1,276	90.4%	19	1,429	1,245	87.1%	21	-3.3%
Arkansas	1,261	1,226	97.2%	5	1,271	1,235	97.2%	6	-0.1%
California	10,299	8,034	78.0%	32	10,491	8,301	79.1%	32	1.1%
Colorado	1,527	904	59.2%	44	1,555	968	62.3%	44	3.0%
Connecticut	1,089	536	49.2%	49	1,099	547	49.8%	49	0.6%
Delaware	215	212	98.6%	3	226	222	98.2%	4	-0.4%
D.C.	172	165	95.9%	6	186	171	91.9%	11	-4.0%
Florida	3,193	2,908	91.1%	15	3,271	2,997	91.6%	13	0.5%
Georgia	2,129	1,994	93.7%	11	2,160	2,150	99.5%	2	5.9%
Hawaii	290	275	94.8%	9	279	252	90.3%	18	-4.5%
Idaho	597	546	91.5%	14	662	557	84.1%	27	-7.3%
Illinois	4,454	2,547	57.2%	46	4,412	2,542	57.6%	46	0.4%
Indiana	2,291	1,566	68.4%	36	2,162	1,370	63.4%	43	-5.0%
Iowa	1,673	1,519	90.8%	18	1,606	1,424	88.7%	20	-2.1%
Kansas	1,615	1,333	82.5%	28	1,599	1,322	82.7%	29	0.1%
Kentucky	1,524	1,387	91.0%	16	1,521	1,394	91.7%	12	0.6%
Louisiana	1,702	1,562	91.8%	12	1,709	1,572	92.0%	10	0.2%
Maine	738	589	79.8%	30	728	586	80.5%	30	0.7%
Maryland	1,498	1,341	89.5%	20	1,516	1,371	90.4%	17	0.9%
Massachusetts	2,343	1,552	66.2%	38	2,369	1,563	66.0%	40	-0.3%
Michigan	4,016	2,975	74.1%	33	4,023	3,014	74.9%	33	0.8%
Minnesota	1,885	1,251	66.4%	37	1,989	1,348	67.8%	36	1.4%
Mississippi	924	821	88.9%	21	921	833	90.4%	16	1.6%
Missouri	2,542	2,102	82.7%	27	2,569	2,146	83.5%	28	0.8%
Montana	816	522	64.0%	41	807	557	69.0%	35	5.1%
Nebraska	1,026	521	50.8%	48	1,024	540	52.7%	47	2.0%
Nevada	465	404	86.9%	24	472	420	89.0%	19	2.1%
New Hampshire	506	370	73.1%	34	511	378	74.0%	34	0.9%
New Jersey	2,642	1,115	42.2%	51	2,653	1,157	43.6%	51	1.4%
New Mexico	800	732	91.5%	13	816	759	93.0%	9	1.5%
New York	5,964	5,040	84.5%	26	5,948	5,063	85.1%	26	0.6%
North Carolina	2,235	2,134	95.5%	8	2,272	2,197	96.7%	7	1.2%
North Dakota	437	257	58.8%	45	434	268	61.8%	45	2.9%
Ohio	4,172	2,126	51.0%	47	4,139	2,172	52.5%	48	1.5%
Oklahoma	1,851	1,606	86.8%	25	1,852	1,607	86.8%	23	0.0%
Oregon	1,334	1,251	93.8%	10	1,412	1,291	91.4%	14	-2.3%
Pennsylvania	3,844	2,500	65.0%	39	3,864	2,581	66.8%	37	1.8%
Rhode Island	382	365	95.5%	7	387	369	95.3%	8	-0.2%
South Carolina	1,099	1,095	99.6%	1	1,096	1,092	99.6%	1	0.0%
South Dakota	692	440	63.6%	42	676	448	66.3%	39	2.7%
Tennessee	1,679	1,526	90.9%	17	1,751	1,597	91.2%	15	0.3%
Texas	6,910	6,724	97.3%	4	7,041	6,871	97.6%	5	0.3%
Utah	798	562	70.4%	35	808	536	66.3%	38	-4.1%
Vermont	336	273	81.3%	29	347	298	85.9%	25	4.6%
Virginia	1,971	1,731	87.8%	22	1,970	1,709	86.8%	24	-1.1%
Washington	1,984	1,725	86.9%	23	2,054	1,784	86.9%	22	-0.1%
West Virginia	790	781	98.9%	2	779	770	98.8%	3	0.0%
Wisconsin	2,479	1,081	43.6%	50	2,465	1,127	45.7%	50	2.1%
Wyoming	377	235	62.3%	43	375	247	65.9%	41	3.5%
TOTAL	**96,937**	**75,215**	**77.6%**		**97,674**	**76,470**	**78.3%**		**0.7%**

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Table 3: TOTAL STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL BREAKFAST PROGRAM (SBP)
School Year 2002-2003

State	Free (F) SBP Students		Reduced Price (RP) SBP Students		Total F&RP SBP Students		Paid SBP Students		Total SBP Students
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Alabama	130,010	78.5%	12,419	7.5%	142,429	86.0%	23,141	14.0%	165,571
Alaska	7,914	67.3%	1,323	11.2%	9,237	78.5%	2,525	21.5%	11,762
Arizona	125,702	76.6%	14,347	8.7%	140,048	85.4%	24,010	14.6%	164,058
Arkansas	94,410	74.4%	10,517	8.3%	104,927	82.7%	21,886	17.3%	126,813
California	692,742	79.0%	94,027	10.7%	786,769	89.7%	90,512	10.3%	877,281
Colorado	44,547	67.9%	6,337	9.7%	50,884	77.6%	14,696	22.4%	65,580
Connecticut	39,633	78.7%	3,429	6.8%	43,062	85.5%	7,312	14.5%	50,374
Delaware	13,304	68.3%	1,412	7.3%	14,717	75.6%	4,760	24.4%	19,476
D.C.	16,423	85.4%	991	5.2%	17,414	90.5%	1,820	9.5%	19,234
Florida	366,598	74.6%	42,578	8.7%	409,175	83.3%	82,081	16.7%	491,257
Georgia	283,968	69.7%	38,159	9.4%	322,127	79.1%	85,036	20.9%	407,163
Hawaii	20,629	54.5%	4,177	11.0%	24,806	65.5%	13,050	34.5%	37,856
Idaho	23,331	68.8%	3,678	10.8%	27,009	79.6%	6,909	20.4%	33,918
Illinois	178,793	82.0%	11,788	5.4%	190,581	87.4%	27,387	12.6%	217,969
Indiana	92,325	70.0%	12,374	9.4%	104,700	79.4%	27,124	20.6%	131,824
Iowa	38,873	54.9%	7,065	10.0%	45,938	64.9%	24,881	35.1%	70,819
Kansas	50,802	65.1%	9,601	12.3%	60,403	77.3%	17,688	22.7%	78,090
Kentucky	132,294	68.3%	18,354	9.5%	150,649	77.7%	43,171	22.3%	193,819
Louisiana	184,970	78.1%	17,091	7.2%	202,061	85.3%	34,769	14.7%	236,830
Maine	16,223	58.6%	2,961	10.7%	19,184	69.3%	8,486	30.7%	27,670
Maryland	79,445	65.2%	13,650	11.2%	93,096	76.4%	28,707	23.6%	121,803
Massachusetts	90,081	78.1%	7,104	6.2%	97,185	84.3%	18,144	15.7%	115,330
Michigan	160,539	74.6%	15,193	7.1%	175,732	81.7%	39,412	18.3%	215,144
Minnesota	60,645	51.7%	12,991	11.1%	73,636	62.8%	43,659	37.2%	117,295
Mississippi	145,952	82.9%	11,556	6.6%	157,508	89.4%	18,613	10.6%	176,121
Missouri	120,149	67.9%	16,236	9.2%	136,385	77.1%	40,571	22.9%	176,956
Montana	12,090	67.0%	1,767	9.8%	13,858	76.8%	4,184	23.2%	18,042
Nebraska	24,177	61.0%	4,086	10.3%	28,263	71.3%	11,355	28.7%	39,618
Nevada	28,680	71.8%	3,914	9.8%	32,594	81.6%	7,355	18.4%	39,949
New Hampshire	8,238	45.5%	1,442	8.0%	9,680	53.5%	8,414	46.5%	18,094
New Jersey	68,479	75.6%	7,909	8.7%	76,387	84.3%	14,249	15.7%	90,637
New Mexico	68,587	74.4%	8,939	9.7%	77,526	84.1%	14,678	15.9%	92,204
New York	347,233	76.1%	35,771	7.8%	383,004	83.9%	73,545	16.1%	456,548
North Carolina	214,146	70.2%	29,204	9.6%	243,350	79.8%	61,658	20.2%	305,008
North Dakota	7,985	54.5%	1,365	9.3%	9,350	63.8%	5,306	36.2%	14,656
Ohio	160,707	78.0%	13,577	6.6%	174,284	84.6%	31,682	15.4%	205,966
Oklahoma	112,420	70.7%	16,783	10.6%	129,203	81.3%	29,802	18.7%	159,005
Oregon	80,375	70.0%	11,052	9.6%	91,427	79.6%	23,382	20.4%	114,809
Pennsylvania	149,932	70.6%	17,360	8.2%	167,293	78.7%	45,146	21.3%	212,438
Rhode Island	14,775	77.9%	1,274	6.7%	16,048	84.6%	2,911	15.4%	18,959
South Carolina	134,878	77.6%	14,072	8.1%	148,950	85.7%	24,880	14.3%	173,830
South Dakota	13,103	69.3%	1,842	9.7%	14,945	79.0%	3,973	21.0%	18,918
Tennessee	148,895	71.7%	18,558	8.9%	167,452	80.6%	40,193	19.4%	207,645
Texas	885,424	77.5%	85,281	7.5%	970,704	84.9%	172,117	15.1%	1,142,821
Utah	29,013	71.1%	4,878	12.0%	33,891	83.0%	6,926	17.0%	40,817
Vermont	9,254	55.8%	1,772	10.7%	11,026	66.5%	5,548	33.5%	16,574
Virginia	117,552	65.8%	18,037	10.1%	135,589	75.9%	43,102	24.1%	178,691
Washington	93,802	71.4%	15,537	11.8%	109,340	83.2%	22,097	16.8%	131,437
West Virginia	53,563	61.7%	10,051	11.6%	63,614	73.3%	23,195	26.7%	86,810
Wisconsin	42,845	63.0%	6,926	10.2%	49,771	73.2%	18,251	26.8%	68,021
Wyoming	6,256	62.7%	1,232	12.4%	7,488	75.1%	2,485	24.9%	9,973
TOTAL	**6,042,713**	**69.6%**	**721,986**	**9.2%**	**6,764,699**	**78.8%**	**1,446,784**	**21.2%**	**8,211,483**

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Table 4: ADDITIONAL PARTICIPATION AND FUNDING IN EACH STATE IF 55 LOW-INCOME STUDENTS WERE SERVED SCHOOL BREAKFAST (SBP) PER 100 SERVED SCHOOL LUNCH (NSLP)

	Free & Reduced Price (F&RP) SBP Students	Additional F&RP Students if 55 SBP per 100 NSLP	Total F&RP Students if 55 SBP per 100 NSLP	Additional Annual Funding if 55 SBP per 100 NSLP F&RP Students
Alabama	142,429	41,605	184,034	$8,566,104
Alaska	9,237	7,343	16,579	$2,436,998
Arizona	140,048	46,894	186,942	$9,655,058
Arkansas	104,927	3,615	108,541	$744,246
California	786,769	329,736	1,116,505	$67,889,926
Colorado	50,884	38,776	89,660	$7,983,665
Connecticut	43,062	27,885	70,948	$5,741,375
Delaware	14,717	4,569	19,285	$940,702
D.C.	17,414	5,415	22,829	$1,114,897
Florida	409,175	114,417	523,593	$23,557,541
Georgia	322,127	23,007	345,134	$4,737,023
Hawaii	24,806	10,789	35,595	$2,609,790
Idaho	27,009	15,770	42,779	$3,246,831
Illinois	190,581	180,434	371,015	$37,149,817
Indiana	104,700	46,575	151,274	$9,589,310
Iowa	45,938	24,137	70,075	$4,969,548
Kansas	60,403	16,691	77,093	$3,436,451
Kentucky	150,649	3,172	153,821	$653,161
Louisiana	202,061	19,824	221,885	$4,081,577
Maine	19,184	7,183	26,367	$1,478,970
Maryland	93,096	30,472	123,568	$6,274,018
Massachusetts	97,185	24,706	121,891	$5,086,809
Michigan	175,732	62,237	237,969	$12,814,056
Minnesota	73,636	33,550	107,187	$6,907,725
Mississippi*	157,508	---	---	---
Missouri	136,385	28,061	164,447	$5,777,583
Montana	13,858	6,904	20,761	$1,421,414
Nebraska	28,263	20,447	48,710	$4,209,859
Nevada	32,594	15,021	47,615	$3,092,704
New Hampshire	9,680	6,063	15,743	$1,248,306
New Jersey	76,387	95,628	172,015	$19,688,912
New Mexico	77,526	6,426	83,952	$1,323,099
New York	383,004	241,147	624,151	$49,650,152
North Carolina	243,350	28,400	271,750	$5,847,382
North Dakota	9,350	5,478	14,828	$1,127,841
Ohio	174,284	85,013	259,297	$17,503,422
Oklahoma	129,203	3,799	133,003	$782,240
Oregon*	91,427	---	---	---
Pennsylvania	167,293	89,678	256,971	$18,464,017
Rhode Island	16,048	7,417	23,465	$1,527,007
South Carolina	148,950	13,664	162,614	$2,813,246
South Dakota	14,945	8,531	23,476	$1,756,546
Tennessee	167,452	27,242	194,695	$5,608,951
Texas	970,704	42,563	1,013,267	$8,763,277
Utah	33,891	33,682	67,573	$6,934,836
Vermont	11,026	955	11,981	$196,647
Virginia	135,589	32,544	168,133	$6,700,621
Washington	109,340	41,086	150,426	$8,459,349
West Virginia*	63,614	---	---	---
Wisconsin	49,771	65,283	115,054	$13,441,217
Wyoming	7,488	4,526	12,014	$931,788
TOTAL	**6,764,699**	**2,028,361**	**8,794,294**	**$418,936,013**

**MS, OR and WV are the top 3 states in F&RP student participation in the SBP, averaging 55 SBP per 100 NSLP F&RP students.*

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Table 5: STATE LEGISLATION PROMOTING SCHOOL BREAKFAST

Types of state school breakfast legislation included in this table:

State mandate (M) – State law mandating that all or certain schools participate in the School Breakfast Program (SBP)
State funding ($) – State funds for one purpose or another related to the SBP
Universal breakfast legislation (U) – State funding for universal free school breakfast in certain schools
Reporting requirement (R) – State law that schools or districts report reasons for nonparticipation in the SBP
Scheduling requirement (S) – State law that school schedules allow students enough time to eat breakfast
Board of education requirement (B) – State board of education requirement for some purpose related to the SBP

Alabama		NONE
Alaska		NONE
Arizona	R	Schools that have 35 percent or more free or reduced price (F&RP) eligible students and that do not participate in the School Breakfast Program (SBP) must report the reasons for nonparticipation. HR 2211, 45th Leg., 1st Reg. Sess. (Az. 2001). In effect since September 2001, this act has been repealed effective January 1, 2004.
Arkansas	M	School breakfast is required in schools with 20 percent or more F&RP eligible students. ARK. CODE ANN. § 6-18 705.
		The State Board of Education may grant a one-year waiver to schools with 20 percent or more F&RP eligible students if the school lacks facilities or equipment to offer a school breakfast program. Waivers may also be granted to high schools where 50 percent or more F&RP eligibl students do not participate. ARK. CODE ANN. § 6-18-705.
California	M	Public schools must provide at least one free or reduced price meal daily to all F&RP eligible students. CAL. EDUC. CODE § 49558.
	$	Grants of up to $15,000 are available per school, on a competitive basis, up to the annual appropriation ($891,000 for school year 2003 2004), for nonrecurring breakfast start-up and expansion expenses where 20 percent or more of students are approved for F&RP meals. CAL. EDUC. CODE § 49550.3.
		The State provides an additional reimbursement, adjusted annually. The 2003-04 rate is $.134 per meal served in public and private schools. CAL. EDUC. CODE §49536.
Colorado	$	For every budget year beginning with 2002 2003, the State will appropriate moneys for the creation, expansion, or enhancement of the SBP in low performing schools (any school that received an academic performance rating of low or unsatisfactory the preceding school year). COL. REV. STAT. § 22 54-123.5.
Connecticut	M	School breakfast is required in K-8 schools where 80 percent of lunches served are F&RP eligible. CONN. GEN. STAT. ANN. § 10 266w.
	$	Within the limits of annual appropriation, the State offers a $3,000 flat grant to each severe need school (those where 40 percent or more of the lunches served in the second preceding yea were to F&RP eligible students), and up to $0.10 reimbursement per breakfast served in each severe need school. CONN. GEN. STAT. ANN. § 10 266w.
Delaware		NONE
District of Columbia		NONE
Florida	M	School breakfast is required in all public elementary schools. FLA. STAT. § 1006.06.
	$	The State provides the difference between the federal reimbursement and the average statewide school breakfast cost for every school breakfast served in public elementary schools. FLA. STAT. 1006.06.

Table 5: STATE LEGISLATION PROMOTING SCHOOL BREAKFAST

Georgia	M	School breakfast is required in K-8 schools with 25 percent or more F&RP eligible students and in all other schools with 40 percent or more F&RP eligible students. GA. CODE ANN. § 20-2-66
Hawaii	$	The State provides approximately $0.14 per breakfast.
Idaho		NONE
Illinois	$	The State provides start-up funds of up to $3,500 per school for nonrecurring costs; priority is given to schools with at least 50 percent F&RP eligible students. IL. STAT. § 105 ILCS 125/2.5.
		The State provides $0.15 per free breakfast served. Schools are eligible for additional $0.10 reimbursement for each free, reduced price and paid breakfast served if breakfast participation increases; the additional reimbursement is automatic if the number of breakfasts served in the month exceeds the number of breakfasts served in the same month of the previous year by 10 percent. IL. STAT. § 105 ILCS 125/2.5.
	U	The State provides funding for a universal breakfast pilot program for schools with 80 percent or more F&RP lunch eligible students. IL. STAT. § 105 ILCS 125/2.5.
Indiana	M	School breakfast is required in public schools with 25 percent or more F&RP eligible students. IND. CODE ANN. § 20-5-13.5-4.
Iowa	$	The State provides additional reimbursement for all breakfasts, free, reduced price and paid, until appropriated funds are depleted.
Kansas	M	School breakfast is required in schools with 35 percent or more F&RP eligible students. KAN. STAT. ANN. § 72-5125.
Kentucky	S	School districts are required to arrange bus schedules so that all buses arrive in sufficient time for schools to serve breakfast prior to the instructional day. KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 158.070.
	R	All schools without breakfast must report on the reasons and any problems that inhibit participation by September 15th of the particular school year. KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 157.065.
Louisiana	M	The school board must operate the breakfast program if at least 25 percent of the students enrolled in one or more schools in the system are F&RP eligible. LA. REV. STAT. ANN. §17:192
Maine		NONE
Maryland	M	School breakfast is required in public elementary schools, but those schools with less than 15 percent F&RP eligible students may be exempted. MD. CODE. ANN. EDUC. § 7-701 and §7-702
	$	The State provides $0.1325 for F&RP breakfasts in non-severe need schools and $0.50 in severe need schools (those where 40 percent or more of the lunches served in the second preceding year were to F&RP eligible students).
	U	The State sponsors Maryland Meals for Achievement, an in-classroom universal school breakfast program. MD. CODE. ANN., EDUC. § 7-704. For 2002-2003, $1.928 million was allocated for Maryland Meals for Achievement.
Massachusetts	M	School breakfast is required in public schools in severe need schools (those where 40 percent or more of the lunches served in the second preceding year were to F&RP eligible students) and where more than 50 F&RP meal applications are on file from the preceding school year. MASS GEN. LAWS ch.69 §1C.
	$	The State allocates $2.2 million for start-up and outreach grants for the breakfast and summer food programs, and for a state mandate reimbursement. Mandated schools may receive an additional $0.10 for F&RP meals if breakfast costs exceed federal severe need reimbursements.

M: State mandate *R: Reporting requirement* *U: Universal breakfast legislation*
$: State funding *S: Scheduling requirement* *B: Board of education requirement*

Table 5: STATE LEGISLATION PROMOTING SCHOOL BREAKFAST

Massachusetts	U	The State provided $5.3 million for FY 2003 for universal breakfast, of which $1.5 million was allocated for meal reimbursement. This results in approximately $0.30 reimbursement per breakfast if costs exceed other reimbursements (this reimbursement is separate from the additional $0.10 for mandated schools). The balance of $3.8 million was allocated for grants.
Michigan	M	School breakfast is required in schools with 20 percent or more F&RP eligible students during the immediately preceding school year. MICH. COMP. LAWS § 380.1272a.
	$	The State provides per meal reimbursements, subject to annual appropriation, to cover the lesser of actual costs or 100 percent of the cost of an efficiently operated program. MICH. COMP LAWS § 380.1272d.
		School breakfast funding appropriated for FY 2003 was $6,274,900 and for FY 2004 is $10,370,000.
Minnesota	M	School breakfast is required in public schools with 33 percent or more F&RP eligible students. MINN. STAT. ANN. § 124D.117.
	U	In school year 2002-2003, $2,567,000 was provided as breakfast reimbursements to schools tha provided breakfast at no charge to all students through "The Fast Break to Learning" breakfast program. Assistance for "The Fast Break to Learning" was repealed commencing with the 200 2004 school year.
	$	In school year 2002-2003, an additional $700,000 was provided in traditional breakfast reimbursements. The state provided $0.051 per breakfast in schools with up to 32 percent F&RP eligible students; an additional $0.105 per meal for F&RP breakfasts in schools with 33 percent to 40 percent F&RP eligible students; and an additional $0.051 per meal for paid breakfasts in severe need schools (those where 40 percent or more of the lunches served in the second preceding year were to F&RP eligible students). MINN. STAT. ANN. § 124D.115.
		Starting with the 2003-2004 school year, the State provides each participating school $0.30 for each reduced price breakfast and $0.55 for each paid breakfast. MINN. SEC. LAWS §124D.1158
Mississippi		NONE
Missouri	M	School breakfast is required in schools with 35 percent or more F&RP eligible students. MO. REV. STAT. § 191.803.
	$	Subject to appropriations, the state board of education shall establish a hardship grant program to provide state supplemental funding for the federal SBP. Any school that participates in the SBP can apply for a hardship grant. Hardship grants will be awarded to schools with the highest need factor. MO. ANN. STAT. § 191.805.
Montana	$	Schools may apply for breakfast program start-up funds. MONT CODE ANN. § 20-10-208 This funding was terminated effective June 30, 2003.
Nebraska	$	The State provides $0.05 per breakfast in those public schools that also participate in a lunch program. NEB. REV. STAT. § 79-10,138.
Nevada		NONE
New Hampshire		NONE
New Jersey	M	School breakfast is required in schools where 20 percent or more of the students enrolled on October 1st of the preceding school year were F&RP eligible. The SBP shall be implemented b September 1, 2004 in all schools with 20 percent or more F & RP eligible students, and by September 2005 in all other schools. N. J. STAT. § 18A:33-10.

M: State mandate *R: Reporting requirement* *U: Universal breakfast legislation*
$: State funding *S: Scheduling requirement* *B: Board of education requireme*

Table 5: STATE LEGISLATION PROMOTING SCHOOL BREAKFAST

New Jersey	M	One-year waivers may be granted by the New Jersey Department of Agriculture to schools that lack the staff, facilities, or equipment to offer the SBP. One-year waivers may also be granted to high schools where 50 percent or more of the eligible students decline to participate in the SBP. N. J. 210TH LEG, 2ND REG. SESSION, NO. 1498.
	$	For school year 2003-2004, the State appropriated $1,588,000 to provide $0.10 for all breakfast meals served: free, reduced price and paid. N. J. 210TH LEG, 2ND REG. SESSION, CHAP. 122.
New Mexico		NONE
New York	M	School breakfast is required in elementary schools; in schools located in school districts with at least 125,000 inhabitants; and in schools that participate in the school lunch program and have 40 percent or more of lunches served to F&RP eligible students. N.Y. COMP. CODES R. & REGS. tit. 8, § 114.2.
	$	The State provides reimbursements of no less than $0.11 for free breakfasts, $0.17 for reduced price breakfasts, and $0.0025 for paid breakfasts. The State also provides reimbursement of all expenses exceeding revenues in first year of breakfast implementation in a public school.
North Carolina	U	The State appropriates funds to provide free universal breakfast to kindergarten students.
North Dakota		NONE
Ohio	M	School breakfast is required in schools with either 33 percent of students eligible for free meals or where 50 percent or more of the students' parents have requested a school breakfast program. OHIO REV. CODE ANN. § 3313.81.3.
	$	The State appropriated a total of $3.3 million for FY 2002-2003 for school breakfast programs. $2.8 million was appropriated to supplement breakfast reimbursements at $0.10 per breakfast, and $500,000 was for rural start-up programs. For FY 2003-2004 the State appropriated $3.8 million for school breakfast programs, including $1 million for outreach. $2.3 million is to supplement reimbursements at approximately $0.07 per breakfast. The remaining $500,000 is available as a Breakfast Incentive Program to reward schools for significantly increasing breakfast participation, for starting a new breakfast program with a certain level of participation or for schools that maintain a 75 percent participation rate.
Oklahoma		NONE
Oregon	M	School breakfast is required in all schools where 25 percent or more of the students are F&RP eligible, and in Chapter I schools. OR. REV. STAT. §327.535.
Pennsylvania	$	The State provides no less than $0.10 per breakfast and lunch served. The State provides an additional $0.02 ($0.12 total) per lunch to schools that participate in both lunch and breakfast. The State also provides an additional $0.04 ($0.14 total) per lunch to schools that have over 20 percent student enrollment in school breakfast. 22 PA. STAT. § 13-1337.1 (2003).
Rhode Island	M	School breakfast is required in all public schools. R.I. GEN. LAWS § 16-8-10.1.
	$	The State appropriated $700,000 in school year 2003-2004 for breakfast supervision costs.
South Carolina	M	School breakfast is required in all public schools. SC CODE ANN. §59-63-790. The State Board of Education may grant a waiver from SC CODE ANN. §59-63-790 if the school lacks equipment or facilities to implement such a program, if the program is not cost effective, or if implementation creates substantial scheduling difficulties. SC CODE ANN. §59-63-800.

M: State mandate *R: Reporting requirement* *U: Universal breakfast legislation*
$: State funding *S: Scheduling requirement* *B: Board of education requirement*

Table 5: STATE LEGISLATION PROMOTING SCHOOL BREAKFAST

South Dakota		NONE
Tennessee	M	School breakfast is required in K-8 schools with 25 percent or more F&RP eligible students and in all other schools with 40 percent or more F&RP eligible students. TENN. CODE ANN. § 49-6-2302.
Texas	M	School breakfast is required in public schools and open-enrollment charter schools with 10 percent or more F&RP eligible students. TEX. EDUC. CODE ANN. § 33.901.
Utah	R	The State requires elementary schools without breakfast to report reasons for nonparticipation every three years. UTAH CODE ANN. § 53A-19-301.
		The State requires that each local school board, at least once every three years, review the reasons why the elementary school in its district does not participate in the School Breakfast Program. UTAH CODE ANN. § 53A-19-301.
Vermont	M	Starting in 2004, school breakfast will be required in all public schools unless the commissioner grants a waiver or the district is exempt from the requirement. VT. STAT. ANN. § 1264.
		Exemptions are granted for one year if the voters of the district vote for exemption at an annual or special meeting, and the school board must review the exemption annually. VT. STAT. ANN. § 1265.
	$	The State appropriated approximately $95,339 in FY 2003 for breakfast reimbursements. The per plate reimbursement rate is determined by dividing total funds by total number of breakfasts served.
Virginia	M	School breakfast is required in public schools with 25 percent or more F&RP eligible students. VA. CODE ANN. § 22.1-207.3.
Washington	M	School breakfast is required in schools where over 40 percent of the lunches served are F&RP. WASH. REV. CODE § 28A.235.140.
	$	The State provides $2.5 million for breakfast reimbursements per year. This results in approximately $0.127 reimbursement per F&RP breakfast served, which is also adjusted at the end of the year to utilize the entire appropriation.
		The superintendent of public instruction may grant additional funds for breakfast start-up and expansion grants, when appropriated. WASH. REV. CODE § 28A.235.150.
West Virginia	M	School breakfast is required in all schools. W. VA. CODE § 18-5-37.
		Waivers, of up to two years, may be granted to schools with compelling circumstances. W. VA. CODE § 18-5-37.
	B	The Board of Education requires that students be afforded at least 10 minutes to eat after receiving their breakfast. W. VA. CODE ST. R. tit. 126, § 86-7.
Wisconsin	$	The State provided $1,055,400 in 2002-2003 to reimburse up to $0.10 per breakfast served that meets the nutritional requirements of 7 CFR § 220.8 or 220.8a, in both public and private schools. WIS. STAT. §115.341.
Wyoming		NONE

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